

Crux Easton

A fine and rare example of Victorian engineering

HMG, HIAS and the Crux Easton Wind Engine Conservation Trust worked together in restoring this rare example of wind engine technology, erected in 1891 for the Earl of Carnarvon. The painstaking restoration of this Grade II Listed engine earned a conservation award from Basingstoke and Dean District Council in 2003 for the high quality of craftsmanship carried out.

The impressive construction consists of a 20ft wind wheel on a 32ft hexagonal skeletal steel tower, which originally pumped water from a 350 ft deep well in addition to driving farm machinery to grind corn by harnessing wind via its 48 canvas sails, each of which is 5ft in length; (their angle is adjustable to allow for variations in the strength of the wind and a fan tail which enables the engine to turn into the wind).

There are actually two well known engineers connected to Crux Easton: the man who designed the *Simplex Self-Regulating Geared Wind Engine*, John Wallis Titt from Warminster in Wiltshire, and Geoffrey de Havilland of aeronautical engineering fame.

On the last Open Day of 2010 there was an extremely rare event of commemoration for Geoffrey de Havilland



Ruth Andrews captures a Moth in Crux Easton field

Trustee Lyn Peet writes to tell us about it :

On Saturday, 11th September, Crux Easton skies were a-buzz with moths – no, not the kind that eat clothes – but members of the de Havilland Moth Club who flew their planes in to celebrate the centenary (to the day) of Sir Geoffrey de Havilland's first successful flight in 1910, of an aeroplane he had designed and built himself.

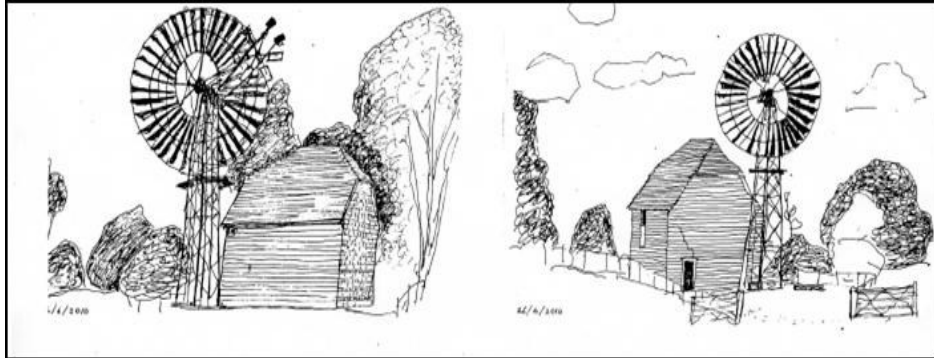
Some 25 – 30 planes landed on a field known as de Havilland's and when lined up were an impressive sight. Nearby, in the Wind Engine field, marquees and a hog roast welcomed the aviators and enthralled visitors.

The Crux Easton Wind Engine had over 122 people to view the well and look at the display of model aeroplanes together with press cuttings about Geoffrey de Havilland and his family.

The church had standing room only for a talk about him and his father who was Rector here in the early 20th Century.

A local band played during the lunch break and there was a further talk on de Havilland's various factories and the development of his aircraft.

It was a very special day.



sketch by Andrew Rutter